(7) To persuade the subscribers to come forward to deposit the old dues and build better relationship in the competitive era, discount scheme were also launched.

(8) Procedure for settlement of defaulter cases through Lok Adalat has been introduced.

(9) For recovery of outstanding telephone dues in respect of permanently closed connection under Basic & WLL service and CMTS, incentive to staff is launched.

(10) Connection remaining disconnected for non-payment even after incoming disconnection are permanently closed and accounts regularized by adjusting Security deposit if any available.

(11) Instructions for timely recovery of dues from Private Operators were issued to all operators from time to time.

(12) The progress in regard to liquidation of outstanding dues in closely monitored and circles are addressed periodically to take all necessary steps to recover the same.

Illegal workers in foreign countries

*372. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated number of Indian workers illegally working in the foreign countries especially in the Gulf countries.

(b) whether the passports and other documents of the workers from India are being seized by their employers;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to render necessary assistance and protect such workers from harassment and deportation?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Our mission abroad do not get the figures of exact number of illegal Indian emigrant workers from local authorities. However, the gulf countries from time to time declare amnesty for illegal emigrants either to regularise their stay or leave the country without penalty.

(b) and (c) As per reports received from the Indian Missions in Gulf countries and Malaysia complaints are received from time to time about the passports of the workers being in the possession of the foreign employer or sponsor. The Indian Mission in these countries, take up the matter with the local authorities concerned for released of passports on receipt of such complaints.

(d) The cases of exploitation and ill-treatment of Indian workers is reported to the Indian Missions and this Ministry from time to time. The complaints mainly pertain to contractual violations by employers such as non-payment/delayed payment of salary, non-availability of medical facilities, proper food, unhygienic living conditions etc. including withholding of passports. For protection and welfare of workers against harassment in the foreign countries the following measures are taken:

(i) On receipt of complaints against registered recruiting agents action is taken by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs under the provision of Emigration Act, 1983, leading to suspension and cancellation of their registration certificate/license in serious cases.

(ii) In respect of unregistered recruiting agents, the complaints are referred to concerned State Police Authorities/Protectors of Emigrants for investigation and action for violation of Section 10 of Emigration Act 1983 and other provisions of the law as appropriate.

(iii) In respect of complaint against the foreign employer (FE), FE is placed in the Prior Approval Category (Black list) and as a consequence is not allowed to recruit workers from India.

(iv) In case the stay of the Indian emigrant worker is declared illegal on account of various reasons, the Indian Missions take up the matter with the local authorities for either regularising their stay or their safe deportation back to India.

(v) In case deportation is required, this Ministry coordinates with the local Government through Indian Missions, the State Government authorities, Ministries of Home Affairs and External Affairs for ensuring their safe passage back to India.

(vi) Further in order to ensure the protection and welfare of Indian workers by the host countries, Government of India has entered into bilateral labour MoUs with UAE in December 2006, and with Kuwait in April 2007. An additional protocol with Qatar was signed in November 2007 to update the 1985 Agreement with that country. MoU with Malaysia has been finalised. Such MoUs with Bahrain, Oman and Yemen are underway. These MoUs and Agreements provide for a broad framework for co-operation in Labour and employment and also provide for Joint Working Groups of senior officers from both sides as an effective grievance redressal mechanism for better protection and welfare of overseas Indian workers.

Global warming

♦373. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that if climatic trends continue unabated, global warming would threaten our health, our cities, our farms and forests, beache sand wetlands, and other natural habitats;

(b) if so, the impact on above segment likely to occur in India, sector-wise;

(c) whether, recently, Government accepted the fact of impact of global warming on agriculture and irregular rain;

(d) if so, the details and measures taken; and

(e) the programme Government has launched to create awareness on global warming?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The Government is aware of the likely impacts of global warming on various sectors. A preliminary assessment of impact and vulnerability due to projected climate change in key sectors such as water, agriculture, forestry, ecosystems, coastal zones, health, energy and infrastructure was undertaken at the time of preparation of India's Initial National Communication on Climate Change submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 2004. The projects climate change impact scenarios indicate increase in and variable trend of both rainfall and temperature into the 21st century, reduction in the quantity of suface run off across the various river basins, severity of droughts and intensity of floods in various parts of the country.